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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/820,530	03/29/2001	Kazutoyo Maehiro	P23936	5426

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GREENBLUM & BERNSTEIN, P.L.C.
1950 ROLAND CLARKE PLACE
RESTON, VA 20191

EXAMINER

LÉE, PHILIP C

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2152

NOTIFICATION DATE	DELIVERY MODE
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07/11/2007

ELECTRONIC

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

gbpatent@gbpatent.com
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Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/820,530

Applicant(s)

MAEHIRO, KAZUTOYO

Examiner

Philip C. Lee

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 23 March 2007.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

1. In view of the Appeal Brief filed on 03/23/07, PROSECUTION IS HEREBY REOPENED. New grounds of rejection are set forth below.
2. To avoid abandonment of the application, appellant must exercise one of the following two options:
 - (1) file a reply under 37 CFR 1.111 (if this Office action is non-final) or a reply under 37 CFR 1.113 (if this Office action is final); or,
 - (2) request reinstatement of the appeal.
3. If reinstatement of the appeal is requested, such request must be accompanied by a supplemental appeal brief, but no new amendments, affidavits (37 CFR 1.130, 1.131 or 1.132) or other evidence are permitted. See 37 CFR 1.193(b)(2).
4. Claims 1-9 are presented for examination.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

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6. Claims 1-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Morris et al, U.S. Patent 7,216,144 (hereinafter Morris) in view of Slutsman et al, U.S. Patent 7,177,905 (hereinafter Slutsman), and further in view of Shtivelman, U.S. Patent 6,346,952 (hereinafter Shtivelman).

7. As per claims 1 and 9, Morris teaches the invention substantially as claimed in which a chairman who opens an electronic conference (col. 2, lines 37-41) sets an area (it is inherent that a virtual space must be set for storing chat messages (col. 2, lines 9-29)) for storing chat messages, and in which guests who join said electronic chat send requests for access from video game terminals of the guests (col. 12, lines 32-33), the method comprising:

giving an instruction from the chairman's video game terminal for transmission of said invitation message (col. 12, lines 22-25)(e.g., clicks on the "SEND" button), and

transmitting from the chairman's video game terminal an invitation signal comprising said setup information to said guests' video game terminals based on only said instruction (col. 12, lines 22-32).

8. Morris does not teach storing setup information in a storage section of a chairman's game terminal. Slutsman teaches comprising:

storing setup information for setting said area in a storage section of a chairman's terminal (col. 2, lines 49-56, 60-62; col. 3, lines 4-10)(storing session ID in host terminal),

creating from the chairman's terminal an invitation message comprising said setup information stored in a storage section (col. 3, lines 4-10)(creating a message with session ID stored and missing information, which are part of the conference request),

receiving at the guests' terminals said invitation signal and obtaining said setup information (col. 3, lines 17-28),

creating at the guests' terminals access request signals comprising said setup information (col. 3, lines 30-33), and

transmitting from the guests' terminals to said database (WSCP), said access request signals solely in response to each guest's instruction (col. 3, lines 30-33) (it is inherent that transmission of conference response is in response to the participant's instructions (e.g., clicks on "SEND" or "ACCEPT" button)).

9. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Morris and Slutsman because Slutsman's teaching of storing setup information at the chairman's terminal would enhance the conference negotiating mechanism in Morris's systems by allowing all potential conference participants to use the session identifier for conference negotiation communication to identify the conference to which the communication applies (col. 2, lines 49-56).

10. Morris and Slutsman do not teach a database area storing chat messages. Shtivelman teaches a database area storing chat messages that are sent to and from the terminals (col. 2, lines 50-56; col. 12, lines 16-22; col. 17, lines 47-51).

11. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Morris, Slutsman and Shtivelman because Shtivelman's teaching of a database area storing chat messages would increase the accessibility of Morris's and Slutsman's systems by allowing threaded chat interaction stored in a database for later access and research (col. 2, lines 50-53).

12. As per claim 5, Morris teaches the invention substantially as claimed in which a chairman who opens an electronic conference (col. 2, lines 37-41) sets an area (it is inherent that a virtual space must be set for storing chat messages (col. 2, lines 9-29)), the area storing chat messages that are sent to and from terminals (col. 2, lines 9-29) and in which guests who join said electronic conference send requests for access from video game terminals of the guests (col. 12, lines 32-33), comprises
an instruction device that gives an instruction for transmission of said invitation message created by an invitation message creator (col. 12, lines 22-25) (e.g., clicks on the "SEND" button), and an invitation signal transmitter that transmits an invitation signal comprising said setup information to said guests' video game terminals solely in response to said instruction from the instruction device (col. 12, lines 22-32).

13. Morris does not teach chairman's video game terminal comprising a storage that stores setup information. Slutsman teaches comprising: a chairman's terminal comprising a storage that

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stores setup information for setting said area (col. 2, lines 49-56, 60-62; col. 3, lines 4-10)

(storing session ID in host terminal), an invitation message creator that creates an invitation message comprising said setup information stored in said storage (col. 3, lines 4-10)(creating a message with session ID stored and missing information, which are part of the conference request), and

said guests' terminals comprising a setup information retriever that receives said invitation signal and obtains said setup information(col. 3, lines 17-28),

an access request signal source that creates an access request signals comprising said setup information obtained by the setup information retriever (col. 3, lines 30-33), and a request signal transmitter that transmits to said database (WSCP), said access request signals created at said access request signal source solely in response to each guest's instruction (col. 3, lines 30-33) (it is inherent that transmission of conference response is in response to the participant's instructions (e.g., clicks on "SEND" or "ACCEPT" button)).

14. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Morris and Slutsman because Slutsman's teaching of storing setup information at the chairman's terminal would enhance the conference negotiating mechanism in Morris's systems by allowing all potential conference participants to use the session identifier for conference negotiation communication to identify the conference to which the communication applies (col. 2, lines 49-56).

15. Morris and Slutsman do not teach a database area storing chat messages. Shtivelman teaches a database area storing chat messages that are sent to and from the terminals (col. 2, lines 50-56; col. 12, lines 16-22; col. 17, lines 47-51).

16. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of Morris, Slutsman and Shtivelman because Shtivelman's teaching of a database area storing chat messages would increase the accessibility of Morris's and Slutsman's systems by allowing threaded chat interaction stored in a database for later access and research (col. 2, lines 50-53).

17. As per claims 2 and 6, Morris, Slutsman and Shtivelman teach the invention substantially as claimed in claims 1 and 5 above. Morris further teach wherein said setup information comprises at least one of a name of said electronic conference and a code number for accessing said area of said database (col. 12, lines 26-31)(e.g., chat room name).

18. As per claims 3 and 7, Morris, Slutsman and Shtivelman teach the invention substantially as claimed in claims 1 and 5 above. Morris and Slutsman further teach comprising: receiving at the chairman's terminal, an opening response signal from said server, said opening response signal indicating that said area has been set in said database, said opening response signal comprises an ID number for allowing said server to identify said area of said database (see Slutsman, col. 2, lines 49-56, 60-62; col. 3, lines 4-10), transmitting from the chairman's terminal said invitation signal containing said ID number (see

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Morris, col. 12, lines 22-32; see Slutsman, col. 3, lines 17-24), and adding said ID number contained in said invitation signal to said access request signal (see Slutsman, col. 3, lines 30-33).

19. As per claims 4 and 8, Morris, Slutsman and Shtivelman teach the invention substantially as claimed in claims 3 and 7 above. Morris further teach wherein said setup information comprises at least one of a name of said electronic conference and a code number for accessing said area of said database (col. 12, lines 26-31)(e.g., chat room name).

CONCLUSION

20. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-9, filed 03/23/07, have been fully considered but are moot in view of new grounds of rejection.

21. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

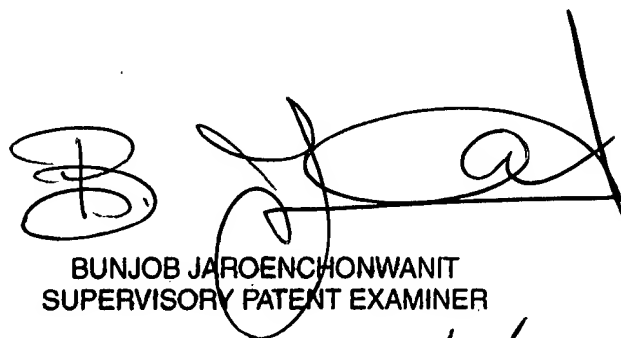
Pelkey et al, US 7,056,217; Harvey et al, US 6,519,629; Roskowski et al, US 2006/0010201.

22. A shortened statutory period for reply to this Office action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Philip C Lee whose telephone

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number is (571)272-3967. The examiner can normally be reached on 8 AM TO 5:30 PM Monday to Thursday and every other Friday. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Bunjob Jaroenchonwanit can be reached on (571) 272-3913. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

P.L.



BUNJOB JAROENCHONWANIT
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER

7/5/7